



# Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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## Spotlight on Rockwall

(Population approx. 39,028)

### Downtown Rockwall: The New Find in North Texas

A growing community located 22 miles east of downtown Dallas on the eastern shore of Lake Ray Hubbard, Rockwall has been a designated Texas Main Street city since 2009.

The revitalization of downtown Rockwall has truly come about through the efforts of many people working together for a common goal. Its rebirth began when the Rockwall City Council applied for and was chosen as an official 2009 Texas Main Street city.

Rockwall's Main Street program has partnered with the Rockwall Old Town Shoppes, and the Friends of Downtown, to attract great restaurants, retail shopping, and thousands of visitors annually. Downtown Rockwall is now a destination for social and entertainment activities for Rockwall residents and tourists from the entire North Texas area.

Since 2009, the Main Street Advisory Board has awarded 18 façade and sign grants totaling \$16,000, which has allowed merchants to improve the exterior of their build-

ings. The façade grant program is funded by the city as well as a contribution from Community Bank. Building facelifts in the district are impactful and have spurred others to make improvements to their properties. Public and private reinvestment in downtown totals \$2.5 million since the inception of the program. Later this year, a voter-approved bond project for downtown improvements will begin, adding \$8.625 million to the reinvestment total when completed.

The enhancements will include street and sidewalk reconstruction, more parking and pedestrian areas, street landscaping, lighting, signage, and furnishings. The passage of the bond project speaks to the enthusiasm citizens have toward this thriving down-



The historic courthouse square in downtown Rockwall.

town. It confirms a desire by the members of the Rockwall community to preserve the heart of Rockwall.



Façade and sign grant recipient for the building at 106 Rusk highlighted in the 2009 First Lady's tour rendering (left: before facade improvement; middle: Texas Main Street design rendering; right: after)

Property values in the downtown district increased 34 percent in the last 10 years, and sales tax collections increased by 30 percent since 2009. Five additional restaurants have opened downtown since the Rockwall Main Street Program began.

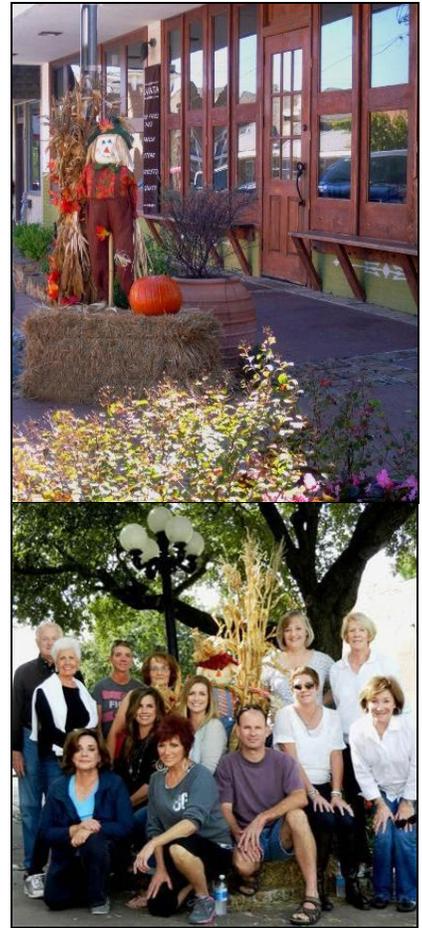
Volunteerism has increased dramatically since the creation of the Main Street program in downtown. A network of 40-50 volunteers has been established, and more than 2,500 volunteer hours have been tracked since 2009. The city holds an annual volunteer reception in

September in downtown featuring live music, cocktails, and heavy hors d'oeuvres—the invitation list includes more Main Street volunteers every year. Youth involvement in Main Street has been great with Boy Scout troupes volunteering to carry watermelons for customers at the downtown farmers market as well as providing cold water on hot summer days. The Rockwall Youth Advisory Council has reached out to Main Street to help build an additional volunteer recruitment program through its Facebook page.

Today, something exciting is happening downtown 26 weekends of the year, including the Farmers Market (a collaborative effort of the Friends of Downtown Rockwall and Rockwall Main



Top: Downtown Farmers Market  
Bottom: Music on the courthouse lawn at the Rib, Rub and Run, a new downtown in 2009 after the city entered the Main Street program.



Downtown volunteers decorate every year for fall and Christmas.

*Thanks to Bethany Golden, Rockwall Main Street Manager for providing this article.*

Street), Founders Day, Just for Kids day, Rib-Rub and Run, Scare on the Square, and the Old Town Christmas Market.

For more information, please call Bethany Golden at 972.772.6400 or see [www.mainstreet.rockwall.com](http://www.mainstreet.rockwall.com).

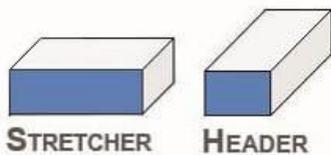
## FOCUS ON MAIN STREET DESIGN

### Bricks:

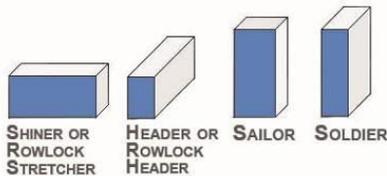
#### Strength in Patterns

In January at the annual Main Street Manager training, Patrick Sparks, a structural engineer, was a featured guest speaker. In his presentation, he touched on brick patterns as a form of structural stability. This design article follows up on some of the information Sparks introduced to discuss and illustrate bricks and how they provide structural stability as well as interesting patterns.

Brick faces (shown in blue below) are identified by their orientation. Most typically seen on the facade is the stretcher face of the brick with the long narrow side exposed. Turning the brick and laying it with the shorter side exposed is called a header brick.



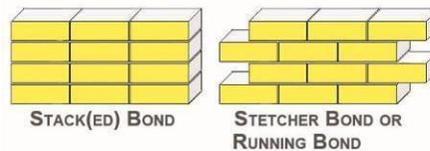
Other brick face orientations are:



Bricks are rather small by themselves, (standard U.S. size is  $8 \times 4 \times 2\frac{1}{4}$  inches) but together in a wall they are given the responsibility of holding up huge buildings. Historically, brick walls were load bearing and were constructed thick to support the height of the building. The taller the building, the thicker the wall was at the base.

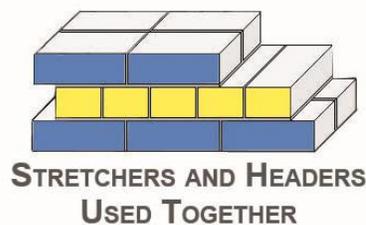
As many young people learned playing with building blocks,

stacking same-size blocks on top of each other is not the strongest design choice, and often ended in a toppled tower (see Stacked Bond image). By staggering the bricks (see Stretcher Bond or Running Bond image), the weight is distributed over a wider area, avoiding a continuous, vertically aligned break. The basic brick pattern with the mortar lines matching up every other row emerges.

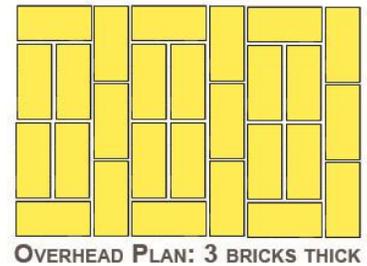


In order to get the brick walls thicker and stronger, the vertically stacked bricks were connected by changing the brick orientation. A layer of vertically-stacked brick is called a wythe, a horizontal row is called a course. The term wythe is commonly used to describe the depth of the wall. For example, a masonry wall comprised of three layers of brick from the exterior to interior would be three wythes thick.

The picture below illustrates the stretchers and headers used together. The row of headers ties the two wythes of brick together so that the entire depth of the wall acts as a unit. Tying the bricks together is important so that two or more layers don't pull apart.



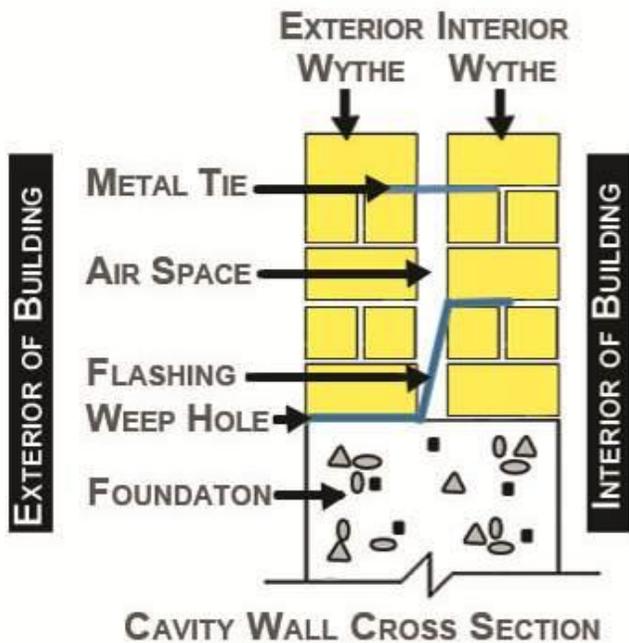
The overhead plan shows how changing brick orientation could be extended several courses for a very thick interconnected sturdy wall.



Water is always a potential problem for any building. With its porous composition, brick can draw rain-water or humidity into it, therefore into the walls. Problems arise if this water cannot escape. To aid in water drainage, cavity walls were introduced in the 19th century and gained widespread use in the 1920s. As its name describes, a cavity wall allows for a space in between brick wythes for water to evaporate or drain through the bottom of the wall through spaces in between the bricks. These spaces where the mortar is purposely left out are called weep holes. Strength is commonly added through metal ties that connect the interior and exterior brick wythes.

The following photo shows an exterior view of a brick wall with weep holes. This is not a case of a poor mortar job, so repointing for missing mortar in this area is not needed.

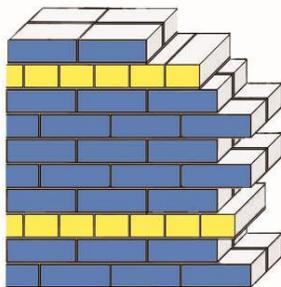




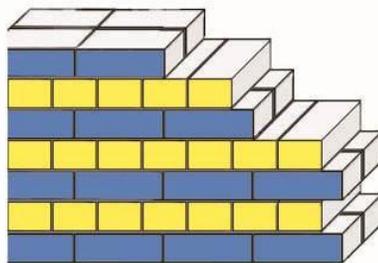
With technological advances, the inner brick wythe (seen in the cavity wall cross section) was commonly replaced with metal framing that could take the load a thick masonry wall historically would have taken. The inner cavity space became a popular area for adding insulation by the 1970s, and was commonly required in building codes by the 1990s. With framing taking the

commonly a mere cosmetic addition. Take a look next time you walk around downtown, you may notice these patterns, and perhaps even more elaborate ones.

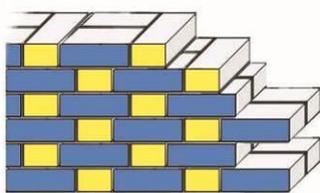
*Thanks to Sarah Blankenship, Texas Main Street Project Design Assistant, for providing this article and illustrations.*



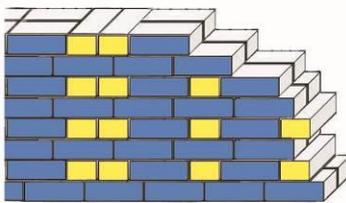
COMMON BOND



ENGLISH BOND



FLEMISH BOND



FLEMISH CROSS BOND

Traditional brick patterns with origins in structural stability that are still used today.

structural load, brick on the exterior façade could be added more as a cosmetic skin, leaving possibilities for new brickwork designs that were less focused on structural stability.

Below are a few of the traditional brick patterns with origins in structural stability that are still used today, even though they are

## MAIN STREET AROUND THE STATE

### Brenham

Brenham Main Street held its second annual Uptown Wine Swirl in Downtown Brenham, netting more than \$12,000 for its downtown incentive grant program.

### Colorado City

Colorado City Main Street coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Economic Development to host a meeting. Presented by the Texas Tech University Small Business Development Center, it was entitled “Small Business Challenges in Meeting the Oil Boom” to help the local small business owners find new and innovative ways to conduct business through the “boom” to ensure success. There were more than 50 people in attendance.

### Vernon

Vernon Main Street’s (VMS) Celebrity Waiter Dinner in February netted more than \$11,000 to be used for downtown physical improvements and beautification. Under this physical improvement grant program, VMS does not spend this money directly; instead, individuals, nonprofits, civic groups, service clubs, or government agencies can apply for a dollar-for-dollar match to any downtown beautification (such as landscaping, benches, trash cans, street lamps, upgraded hardscape treatments, plazas, parks, public art, etc.). They are required to go through design review and a sensible process of checking-off with other affected parties.

### Winnsboro

Winnsboro Main Street will celebrate 10 years as a Texas Main Street city with a ceremony at 10:30 a.m. at the downtown depot and a reception following at the Center for the Arts at 200 Market St.

**Texas Main Street 2013  
First Lady's Tour  
March 28**

As is tradition in Texas Main Street, new cities are welcomed to the program each year with a celebratory visit from the First Lady of Texas. Everyone is invited and managers and board members from fellow Texas Main Street cities are encouraged to attend and support these cities. This year, the schedule is:

March 28, Thursday  
9:30–10:45 a.m. Childress  
1:30–2:45 p.m. San Augustine  
5:30–6:45 p.m. Cuero

All celebrations will be outside in downtown—just look for the crowds.

**Preservation Month  
Activities in Texas**

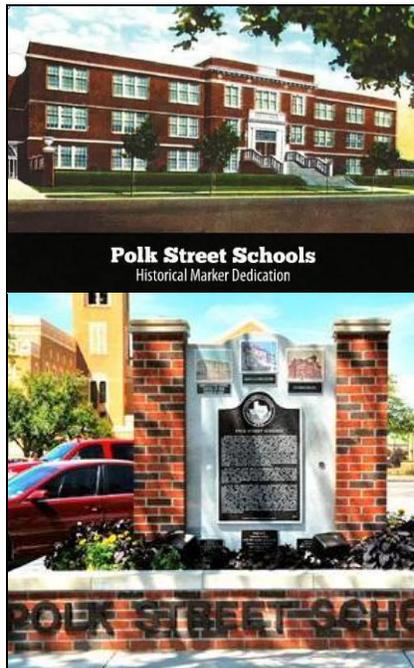
May is National Preservation Month and is a time to celebrate historic places in your city and to educate the local community about the importance of preservation.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has a variety of activities listed on their website [www.preservationnation.org/take-action/preservation-month](http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/preservation-month) as well as a sample preservation proclamation at [www.preservationnation.org/take-action/preservation-month/proclamation.html](http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/preservation-month/proclamation.html).

Following are just a few of the many Preservation Month or preservation education activities from Texas Main Street cities in 2012:

**Amarillo**

Center City of Amarillo partnered with the Amarillo High School Re-



Historical marker dedication of the historic Polk Street Schools served as preservation project for Center City of Amarillo.

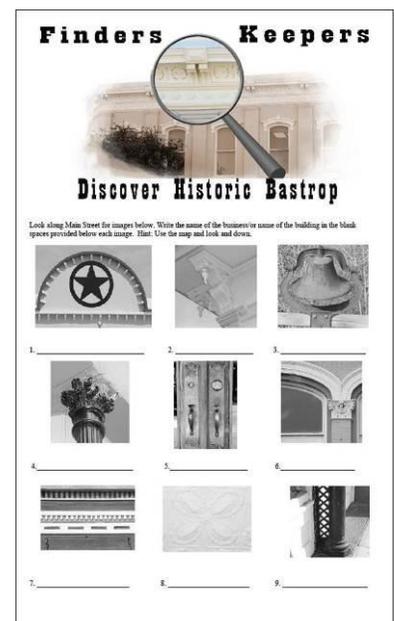
union Classes and gave a \$10,000 grant for a historical marker that was placed at the site of the original Amarillo Schools on Polk Street. The marker shows the history of the Little Red School House, the Elizabeth Nixon Junior High and the Amarillo High School, which burned in 1970. More than 250 people attended the dedication and ceremony. The ceremony was publicized on radio, television and newspaper. Partnerships included Amarillo College, Amarillo High Reunion Classes, the Amarillo Senior Citizens Association (which occupies the remaining High School structure) and the city of Amarillo.

Center City also partnered with the art students from Holy Cross Catholic High School to publish a calendar with historic photos paired with original artwork from the students inspired by the historic photos. This calendar was sold by students and by Center City for \$15 or 2/\$25 as a fundraiser. The 18-

month calendar was intended to be a keepsake for nostalgic collectors.

**Bastrop**

In May, 2012, an Austin ISD elementary school brought 7 third-grade classes to Bastrop on a field trip. The groups heard from a re-enactor at the historic Kerr Center about Josiah Wilbarger and his scalping; heard a presentation at the historic Bastrop Opera House given by the Bastrop Main Street Program (BMSP) Director about how communities formed and learned about elements of building architecture; took a walk along Main Street with BMSP volunteers to find architectural building details pictured on a scavenger hunt page called Finders Keepers?; visited the historic 1889 bank building which houses the Bastrop Visitor Center; had an escorted tour of the old Bastrop jail building, cir.1890; and finished the trip with lunch on the County Courthouse lawn. The event was so successful that it has been added to the Austin ISD curriculum for May 2013.



Bastrop features a Finders Keepers scavenger hunt of architectural building details for children during Preservation Month.

## Canyon

The Lunch and Learn fundraiser for Main Street was held in the restored Palace Hotel in downtown. The fundraiser was held on two dates seating 30 people at each event. Janice Cranmer, a local historian and Main Street volunteer, captivated the audience with her amazing stories about Canyon pre-1930s. Both dates were a sold out! It was very well received by the community.

## Kilgore

Kilgore Main Street sponsored a public showing of the two historic theaters, the Crim and the Texan, in downtown in conjunction with a political candidate forum hosted by the Kilgore News Herald. The two theaters were opened two hours prior to the forum. The public was invited to both theaters to reminisce and to vote on what they thought each theater should become. A voting box was provided at each theater along with its history and photos and ideas of what theaters could be. Popular consensus has it that one theater should be repurposed as a country dance hall with the other a performing arts center.

## Palestine

In March 2012, Main Street sponsored a Rich History and Living Secrets historic building tour. A behind-the-sales-counter tour was offered of five historic properties. Property owners and volunteers led small groups through the properties and used the time to highlight Main Street as a cultural and historic resource. Then in May, Main Street partnered to host a Love Your Old Building half-day workshop. Sessions were 30-45 minutes long and focused on topics affecting owners of historic properties. Main Street partnered with Development Services, the Historic Landmark Commission and three local histor-

ic renovation specialists to provide programming.

## Uvalde

Uvalde Main Street Program's design committee hosted a workshop for downtown building and business owners titled "Sign Chat" regarding the ordinances regulating sign type, size and placement as per the Main Street district's Design Standards.

## EVENTS

If you would like one of your Main Street events posted here, email [jill.robinson@tmc.state.tx.us](mailto:jill.robinson@tmc.state.tx.us) at least three weeks ahead of the month in which you want the posting.

### March 16–17, Mineola

Celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Mineola Main Street/Amtrak Reels on the Rails Wine Festival traveling in Texas Eagle coach cars from Mineola to Fort Worth for a great getaway weekend. For more information, see [www.mineola.com](http://www.mineola.com)

### March 23, Huntsville

Huntsville Main Street is sponsoring Spring Clean the Square from 9 a.m.–2 p.m. complete with refreshments and prize drawings every hour. Call 934.295.2150



**MARCH 23<sup>rd</sup>** 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Come take part in the 9<sup>th</sup> annual event to help clean Downtown Huntsville  
**REFRESHMENTS + PRIZES**  
**SPRING CLEAN THE SQUARE**  
SPONSORED BY THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM  
Meet @ the Gazebo on the Courthouse Lawn  
**PRIZE DRAWINGS EVERY HOUR**  
Fun & helpful way to earn community service hours  
For more information contact Jessica at 936-295-2150

### April 5–May 10, Huntsville

The Main Street Music Series will feature local bands and musicians every Friday from 6–9 p.m. on the Walker County Courthouse lawn, free to the public. Two bands will play nightly with a wide range of musical genres. Downtown stores will be open late and there will be gift certificates raffled to use during the music series. Snacks and drinks will also be sold to benefit the Main Street Program to help keep the concerts free.

For more information, call 936.291.5920 or email [kmcauliffe@huntsvilletx.gov](mailto:kmcauliffe@huntsvilletx.gov).

### April 27, Huntsville

The Huntsville Downtown Business Alliance will host Wine Down, Shop Small to sip, snack, and shop under the stars for this second annual event from 4–9 p.m. This will be an evening of downtown shopping while sampling regional Texas wines and fine local cuisine. Several stores in downtown will be participating in late-night shopping. Selected stores will host a unique winery and restaurant in their shop. Live music will help set the fun and festive mood. Shoppers will be able to bid on several silent auction items throughout the night. Tickets are on sale for \$30 prior to the event or \$40 on the day of the event. For more information, call 936.291.1201 or [dejavudecor2010@yahoo.com](mailto:dejavudecor2010@yahoo.com).

## CONFERENCES

### League of Historic American Theaters

The League of Historic American Theaters (LHAT) is hosting its regional conference in Dallas from **April 10–11**. The theme is Best Practices for Maximizing Revenues. The conference includes sessions on fundraising, film programs, best

practices, and more. For more information, see [www.lhat.org/programs/dallas\\_registration.aspx](http://www.lhat.org/programs/dallas_registration.aspx)

## **AWARD APPLICATIONS** **Scenic City Certification**

The Scenic City Certification Program, a project of Scenic Texas in cooperation with the Texas Historical Commission, Texas Municipal League, and several additional partners, is currently accepting 2013 applications through **April 30**.

The program supplies cities an objective review of existing infrastructure ordinances for public roadways and public spaces, evaluated against the Scenic City model. Assessment is points-based, with every applicant receiving a detailed, scored evaluation. Cities earning the highest points are certified for five years. The program looks broadly across the community, not just at downtown. Currently there are 36 Certified Scenic Cities in Texas but only a few—Bastrop, Georgetown, and Grapevine are current Main Street cities.

Visit [sceniccitycertification.org](http://sceniccitycertification.org) for contact information and to access the application, example ordinance language and current Scenic Certified Cities. Also take advantage of an hour-long TML-hosted webinar at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 6, for a detailed review of the Scenic City Certification Program ([sceniccitycertification.org](http://sceniccitycertification.org)) and the application process. Information about the webinar can be found on the TML website at [tml.org](http://tml.org) under the Training tab.

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## **Calendar of Events**

- **March 28**  
Texas Main Street First Lady's Tour (welcoming 2013 cities to the program) to the downtowns of: Childress (9:30 a.m.–10:45 a.m.), San Augustine (1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.), and Cuero (5:30 p.m.–6:45 p.m.).
- **March 28, Victoria**  
Presentation by Jon Schallert, 8 a.m. –1:30 p.m., "Transform your Business into a Consumer Destination" at the Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts, 214 N. Main St., tickets \$25 Victoria County and \$50 out of county, contact Karol Stewart at Victoria Main Street Program [karol@VictoriaMainStreet.org](mailto:karol@VictoriaMainStreet.org) or call 361.578.0060
- **Apr. 14–16, 2013, New Orleans** National Main Streets Conference, theme: *Main Street and the Cultural Economy*
- **June 4–5, 2013, La Grange**  
New manager training prior to the beginning of Summer training for all managers. New manager training will last all day June 4 through noon June 5.
- **June 5 (after noon)–June 7, 2013 (noon), La Grange**  
Summer Main Street training for all Texas Main Street managers

## Websites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov)  
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: [www.aahpfdn.org](http://www.aahpfdn.org)  
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: [www.ahlp.org](http://www.ahlp.org)  
(The) American Institute of Architects: [www.aia.org](http://www.aia.org)  
American Planning Association: [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)  
American Society of Landscape Architects: [www.asla.org](http://www.asla.org)  
(The) Cultural Landscape Foundation: [www.tclf.org](http://www.tclf.org)  
(The) Handbook of Texas Online: [www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online](http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online)  
Keep Texas Beautiful: [www.ktb.org](http://www.ktb.org)  
League of Historic American Theatres: [www.lhat.org](http://www.lhat.org)  
National Main Street Center: [www.preservationnation.org/main-street](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street)  
National Park Service: [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)  
National Trust for Historic Preservation: [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)  
Partners for Sacred Places: [www.sacredplaces.org](http://www.sacredplaces.org)  
Preservation Easement Trust: [www.preservationeasement.org](http://www.preservationeasement.org)  
PreservationDirectory.com: [www.preservationdirectory.com](http://www.preservationdirectory.com)  
Preservation Texas: [www.preservationtexas.org](http://www.preservationtexas.org)  
Project for Public Spaces: [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: [www.railstotrails.org](http://www.railstotrails.org)  
Scenic America: [www.scenic.org](http://www.scenic.org)  
Texas Department of Agriculture: [www.TexasAgriculture.gov](http://www.TexasAgriculture.gov)  
Texas Commission on the Arts: [www.arts.state.tx.us](http://www.arts.state.tx.us)  
Texas Downtown Association: [www.texasdowntown.org](http://www.texasdowntown.org)  
Texas Folklife Resources: [www.texasfolklife.org](http://www.texasfolklife.org)  
Texas Historical Commission: [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)  
Texas Rural Leadership Program: [www.trlp.org](http://www.trlp.org)  
Texas State Preservation Board: [www.tspb.state.tx.us](http://www.tspb.state.tx.us)  
Urban Land Institute: [www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org)

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Texas Main Street Program  
Texas Historical Commission  
P. O. Box 12276  
Austin, TX 78711-2276, 512.463.6092, Fax 512.463.5862



**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
*real places telling real stories*